(i) Development of infrastructure.

(ii) Enforcement of ban on fishing from 10th June to 15th August, 2002 in Gujarat.

(iii) Sales Tax subsidy on diesel used for fishing.

(iv) Subsidy on nets and boats.

(v) Sea Ranching.

(vi) Trawl ban in Kerala for 45 days.

(vii) Provision of Artificial Reef.

**Coconut-mite disease in Orissa**

342. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that mites have been eating up coconut crop in Orissa;

(b) whether it is also a fact that on account of resource-crunch, the State authorities are not able to control this menace, as reported in the New Indian Express, Bhubaneswar of 28th December, 2002;

(c) whether this disease had earlier affected the coconut production in other States; if so, the details thereof along with the action taken in the matter; and

(d) the assistance proposed to be rendered by the Centre to control this disease in Orissa?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The incidence of coconut mite was reported in some parts of coastal districts of Orissa. As per the survey conducted by the State Department of Horticulture during July, 2002, around 2.41 lakh palms are infested by mite.

(b) After the report of incidence of coconut mite in Orissa in 2001, Coconut Development Board, immediately, released an amount of Rs. 16.00 lakhs during 2001-2002 under its Integrated Pest Management

Programme for carrying out prophylactic spray against the pest covering two lakh palms, to prevent further spread of the pest.

(c) The incidence of mite was first reported in 1998 from Ernakulam district of Kerala and subsequently spread to Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Pondicherry and some parts of Lakshadweep. The action taken by the Government to control eriophyid mite of coconut is given below:

(i) Coconut Development Board sponsored a research project costing Rs. 3.00 lakh through Project Directorate of Biological Control (PDBC), Bangalore for developing bio-agents for control of mite through biological measures. A bio-agent called "MYCOHIT" has been developed. This is being tested in the field for its efficacy and bio-safety. The Board has also released Rs. 6.65 lakhs to PDBC for further research on this aspect;

(ii) Awareness campaigns/seminars/group discussions among farmers were organised by Coconut Development Board in association with Central Plantation Crops Research Institute and State Agricultural Universities;

(iii) Coconut Development Board has conducted trainings for departmental staff and farmers and developed Website to access information on mite on the net;

(iv) An amount of Rs. 142.45 lakh has been provided under National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP) for research work on coconut mite;

(v) A Steering Committee was constituted to review and coordinate efforts in developing suitable control measures on management of coconut mite. The Committee is reviewing the progress periodically. In its last meeting, the Committee has recommended holistic approach including improvement of nutrient status, use of botanical and bio-pesticides for managing mite affected coconut gardens.

(vi) Central assistance of Rs. 57.99 crores has been provided to the States of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa for control of coconut mite during 1998-99 to 2000-2001 through Coconut Development Board.

(d) An amount of Rs. 16.00 lakhs released to Government of Orissa during 2001-2002 has been revalidated for utilization during the current year, 2002-2003.

**Containing the coconut diseases in Kerala**

343. SHRI VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the production of coconut in Kerala has come down to 5.747 nuts per hectare due to a combination of pests and diseases;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to contain these diseases;

(c) whether the Kerala Government have submitted a proposal for rejuvenation of coconut sector with an outlay of Rs. 576 crores; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The productivity of coconut in Kerala has increased from 5,747 nuts per ha. in 1999-2000 to 5,870 nuts per ha. in 2000-2001.

(b) For management of root wilt disease in Kerala, the Coconut Development Board is implementing the programme on Integrated farming in coconut holdings for productivity improvement which includes cutting and removal of diseases palms, laying out demonstration plots; productivity improvement and organic manuring units. Coconut Development Board since its inception has sanctioned Rs. 110.94 crores to Government of Kerala for various programmes for increasing production and productivity of coconuts in the State. For control of coconut mite which was first reported in Ernakulam district in 1998, an assistance of Rs. 30.09 crores has been provided to the State exclusively for management of mite.

(c) and (d) Government of Kerala submitted a Project for "Enhancing Productivity of Coconut Holdings in Root Wilt Diseased Areas of Kerala" with an outlay of Rs. 576.14 crores for a period of 5 years which includes adoption of scientific crop management; removal of diseases trees in border districts of Thrissur and Thiruvananthapuram; supply of seedlings for replanting and creation of awareness etc. The project stipulated Govt. of India's share of Rs. 181.70 crores.